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THE
CAMBRO-BRITON.

APRIL, 1820.

NULLI QUIDEM MIHI SATIS ERUDITI VIDENTUR, QUIBUS
NOSTRA IGNOTA SUNT. *CICERO de Legibus.*

THE TRIADS.—No. VIII.

—OR—
TRIADS OF THE ISLE OF BRITAIN*

XXXVIII.

THE three Conventional Monarchs of the Isle of Britain: first, Prydain, the son of Aedd Mawr, when a systematical regality was established over the Isle of Britain and the adjacent islands; second, Caradawg, the son of Bran, when there was conferred upon him the war-supremacy over the whole of the Isle of Britain, to resist the incursion of the Romans; and Owain, the son of Macsen Wledig, when the Cymry resumed the sovereignty, agreeably to their natural rights, from the Roman Emperor. That is, they were called the three Conventional Monarchs, from these rights being conferred upon them by the convention of country and border-country, within the whole limits of the nation of the Cymry, by holding a convention in every territory, commote, and cantrev in the Isle of Britain and its adjacent islands.

[According both to Cæsar and Tacitus, and particularly the latter, the inhabitants of this island, upon their discovery by the Romans, consisted, like the Gauls and Germans, of several independent tribes governed by their own chiefs. Yet, when influenced by the prospect of a general advantage or a common danger, these separate states became united in one body. Upon these occasions a chieftain or monarch was chosen from amongst a convention of the whole country as stated in this Triad †. It was thus,

* Arch. of Wales, vol. ii. p. 63. Tr. 34—36.

† One of the Institutional Triads of Dyvnwal Moelmud (Arch. of Wales, vol. iii. p. 290. Tr. 59) describes particularly how this convention was holden, and in his *Trioddy Cludau*, before noticed, it is reckoned as one of the “three conventions by sound of trumpet.” See Arch. of Wales, vol. iii. p. 233.

that Caswallawn was elected to the supreme command against Cæsar, Caradawg against the Romans in the time of Claudius *, and Arthur against the Saxons. And we have here Prydain and Owain recorded as two other conventional Monarchs of the Isle of Britain.—The former of these is a very remarkable personage in the annals of the Cymry : yet writers are not perfectly agreed, whether to assign to him a real or a fabulous character. According to the Triads, however, he was the son of Aedd Mawr or Aedd the Great, one of the first colonists of this island : and he is recorded in several of these ancient documents, one of which has been already translated †, as among the chief of the ancient benefactors and lawgivers of his country. From the same authority we also learn, that the Isle of Britain derived its name from him. Mr. Davies seems to consider Prydain to mean the Regulator of the Seasons, and consequently as synonymous with Apollo, or, at least, with the Sun ‡. But the Triads make no allusion to any mythological attributes, but speak of him in every instance as having had a real existence.—The dignity, here said to have been conferred on Caradawg and Owain, has been before noticed ||. Owain lived at the close of the fourth century and is to be found amongst the saints of the British Church.]

xxxix. The three Hallowed Princes of the Isle of Britain : Bran the Blessed, the son of Llyr Llediaith, who first brought the faith in Christ to the nation of the Cymry from Rome, where he had been for seven years, as hostage for his son Caradawg, whom the men of Rome carried into captivity, after being betrayed, through the enticement, deception, and plotting of Aregweddd Voeddawg ; second, Lleirwg, the son of Coel son of Cyllin the Saint, called Lleuver Mawr [Great Splendour], who founded the first church in Llandav, and which was the first in the Isle of Britain, and he bestowed the privilege of country and nation, with civil and ecclesiastical jurisdiction, upon those who might be of the faith in Christ ; third, Cadwaladr the Blessed, who gave sanctuary within all his lands and possessions to those who fled from the infidel and lawless Saxons, who sought to destroy them.

[The circumstances, here related of Bran, have been already detailed in a Triad previously translated §, in which his family is styled one of the “ three holy families of the Isle of Britain.” The

* See CAMBRO-BRITON, No. 5, p. 168. Tr. XXI.

† No. 2, p. 45.

‡ Celt. Res. pp. 169 and 190.

|| No. 5, p. 169.

§ No. 5, p. 169.

Bonedd y Saint, or Genealogy of the Saints, also mentions Bran as one of the first of the nation of the Cymry, that embraced the Christian faith, and enumerates three persons, Ilid, Cynvan, and Arwystli Hen, as having accompanied him from Rome on his return to this country: and there is still a church in Gwent dedicated to the former of these three. The probability, therefore, of this account is very great: and it is remarkable, that Bishop Stillingfleet, in his *Origines Britannicæ*, conjectures, without being aware of the testimony of our ancient records, that some of the British captives, carried to Rome with Caradawg, may have been instrumental in planting Christianity in this island. The present Bishop of St. David's too, in one of the many works, by which he has promoted the cause of useful and religious learning*, is even disposed to conclude, that St. Paul himself accompanied or immediately followed the family of Caradawg on their return to Britain. This event took place about the year 58: and, with reference to this date, it deserves to be mentioned, that Gildas fixes the introduction of Christianity into Britain at a short period before the defeat of Boadicea, which happened A.D. 61.—Lleirwg, the son of Coel, and, according to the Genealogy of the Saints, the great grandson of the celebrated Caradawg, appears in the *Brut y Brenhinoedd* or Chronicle of the Kings, under the name of Lles, as the 73d King of Britain. Bede and other writers give him the appellation of Lucius, which is but a Latin version of the epithet *Lleuwer*, applied to him in this Triad. Before he founded the Church of Llandaff, as here mentioned, he is said to have made application to Rome for teachers to diffuse the light of Christianity in his dominions, when two persons, called in the Welsh records Dwyvan and Fagan, were dispatched to Britain for the purpose. Nennius ascribes this event to the year of Christ 167, when, he says, "King Lucius with all the chiefs of the British people received baptism in consequence of a legation sent by the Roman Emperors and Pope Euaristus †." Bede fixes the date at A.D. 156, which, however, according to the *Brut y Benhinoedd*, was the year of Lleirwg's death in the city of Gloucester. There is a Church in Glamorgan dedicated to Lleirwg, who, like others of his countrymen in ancient times, united the characters of a prince and a saint.—An opportunity occurred in

* "Christ and not St. Peter the Rock of the Christian Church," p. 14.

† According to other accounts, the Pope, or rather Bishop of Rome, at this time, was Eleutherius.

the last number* for giving a general, though brief, account of Cadwaladr: and the particulars, here recorded of him, require no farther explanation.]

XL. The three System-formers of Royalty of the Isle of Britain: Prydain, the son of Aedd Mawr, Dyvnwal Moelmud, and Bran, the son of Llyr Llediaith. That is, their systems were the best systems of Royalty of the Isle of Britain, so that they were judged superior over all other systems, that were made in the Isle of Britain.

[This Triad requires but little elucidation. Enough has just been said of Prydain and Bran: and a short notice of Dyvnwal Moelmud appeared in a former Number †. The latter is to be found in the Chronicle as the 21st King of Britain, more than three centuries before the Christian æra. Of an age so remote it cannot be expected that much certain intelligence should now remain. However, it is pretty generally admitted, that this prince was amongst the first to make any great improvement in legislation, and that he made the first regular division of the kingdom into hundreds and commotes, for which reason he is here styled one of the “three system-formers” of Britain. His laws were extant in the time of Gildas, who translated them into Latin. Hywel Dda, as mentioned on the former occasion, availed himself largely of them in the compilation of his famous code; and they are also presumed to have been of great service to Alfred the Great, to whom they were communicated by Aser Menevensis. Some Triads, including the Institutes, ascribed to Dyvnwal, are preserved in the Archæology of Wales, and contain much curious matter with respect to the principles of government in an incipient state of society.]

THE TRIADS OF WISDOM ‡.

LI. Three things, that make a man equal to an angel: the love of every good, the love of exercising charity, and the love of pleasing God.

LII. Three things, though obtaining the whole, that will never see their satiety: the sea, a burying-place, and a lord.

LIII. Three things, that, from being despised, bring punishment: the counsel of a spectator, the judgment of the discreet, and the complaint of the poor.

* P. 248.

† No. 2, p. 47.

‡ Arch. of Wales, vol. p. 209.

LIV. Three counsels, that ought chiefly to be listened to, since they never have been otherwise than good: the counsel of the season, the counsel of age, and the counsel of conscience.

LV. Three counsels, that are not often in the wrong: the counsel of circumstance, the counsel of the virtuously wise, and the counsel of a man who never listened to any counsel.

LVI. Three things, the removal whereof is a curse: the boundary of land, the course of water, and the direction of a road and path.

LVII. The three primary ornaments of wisdom: love, truth, and courage.

LVIII. Three things, that can never be seen in the full extent of their magnitude: that is, good principles, bad principles, and the principles of genius.

LIX. By three things will all actions be, that a man shall perform: by liberty, by punishment, and by reward; and there cannot be otherwise of what shall be done by man.

LX. In three things will be seen the primary qualities of the soul of man: in what he may fear, what he would conceal, and what he would shew.

THE WISDOM OF CATWG.



HIS EIGHTEEN VIRTUOUS EXCELLENCIES *

1. The best deportment, humility.
2. The best practice, industry.
3. The best principle, truth.
4. The best genius, reason.
5. The best affection, compassion.
6. The best study, self-knowlege.
7. The best employment, peace-making.
8. The best care, to be just.
9. The best pursuit, knowlege.
10. The best disposition, generosity.
11. The best covetousness, to covet peace.
12. The best choice, the doing of good.
13. The best means of living, trade.
14. The best instruction, literature.

* Arch. of Wales, vol. iii. p. 45.